

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652:

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, KS

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

1. DEPARTMENT HAS RECEIVED FOLLOWING JOINT LETTER DATED JULY 17 FROM CONGRESSMAN DONALD FRASER, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENTS, AND CONGRESSMAN ROBERT NIX, CHAIRMAN, ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE:

QUOTE. THE SUBCOMMITTEES ON INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENTS AND ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS ARE PLANNING A HEARING ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA. THE HEARING WILL TAKE PLACE ON JULY 30, 1974, AT 2 P.M. IN THE CAPITOL (ROOM H-236).

THE SUBCOMMITTEES WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A DEPARTMENT WITNESS ON THIS SUBJECT. WE UNDERSTAND MR. RICHARD SNEIDER, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS, WILL BE THE DEPARTMENT'S WITNESS.

THIS HEARING IS BEING HELD IN CONNECTION WITH THE MARK-UP OF THE FOREIGN AID BILL. WE HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY UNCLASSIFIED

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CONCERNED ABOUT THE INCREASINGLY REPRESSIVE ACTIONS OF THE

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA. ONE MAY SERIOUSLY QUESTION WHETHER OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE IS PROVIDING THE GOVERNMENT WITH MATERIAL AS WELL AS POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR THESE ACTIONS.

IN PREPARING A STATEMENT FOR SUBMISSION TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE, WE WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS DISCUSSED:

(1) AMBASSADOR INGERSOLL'S WRITTEN SUBMISSION OF JUNE 13 TO THE COMMITTEE GIVES A DETAILED STATEMENT ON THE LEGAL RESTRICTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAS INITIATED. THE SUBCOMMITTEES WOULD APPRECIATE ACTUAL DATA ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH THESE LEGAL RESTRICTIONS HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED. MORE SPECIFICALLY, WE WOULD APPRECIATE DATA ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:

(A) THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN SOUTH KOREA. BY POLITICAL PRISONERS I MEAN PERSONS WHO HAVE BEEN DETAINED, ARRESTED OR PUNISHED FOR THEIR BELIEFS, COLOR, ETHNIC ORIGIN OR RELIGION, BUT WHO HAVE NEITHER USED NOR ADVOCATED VIOLENCE;

(B) THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL PRISONERS EXECUTED IN RECENT YEARS; AND GENERALLY, THE SEVERITY OF SENTENCES AGAINST POLITICAL PRISONERS;

(C) THE EXTENT TO WHICH TORTURE IS PRACTICED, AND WHAT MEASURES THE GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN TO PUNISH THE TORTURERS;

(D) THE EXTENT TO WHICH PRISONERS ARE HELD INCOMMUNICADO AFTER ARREST AND WITHOUT FORMAL CHARGES PLACED AGAINST THEM;

(E) THE EXTENT TO WHICH DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES ARE BEING FOLLOWED IN THE TRIALS;

(F) THE EXTENT OF TRADE UNION FREEDOM IN KOREA;

(G) THE LIMITATIONS ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM AT THE UNIVERSITIES;

(H) FREEDOM OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN CONNECTION WITH BOTH UNCLASSIFIED

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THE ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT, ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE NATIONS ASSEMBLY, AND OTHER ELECTIONS.

(2) WHAT REPRESENTATIONS HAS THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT MADE WITH RESPECT TO VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH KOREA?

(3) AMBASSADOR INGERSOLL STATED IN HIS WRITTEN STATEMENT

THAT THE GOVERNMENT IN INSTITUTING THESE RESTRICTIONS CITES "THE THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY IT PERCEIVES FROM A HOSTILE NORTH KOREA." DOES THE DEPARTMENT BELIEVE THESE MEASURES ARE NECESSARY FOR KOREA'S NATIONAL SECURITY? TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE DEPARTMENT BELIEVE THESE RESTRICTIONS HAVE NOT BEEN MADE FOR REASONS OF NATIONAL SECURITY, BUT SIMPLY TO PREVENT ANY LEGITIMATE DEMANDS FOR DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES AND THE POSSIBILITY OF A DEFEAT OF PRESIDENT PARK'S REGIME?

(4) PRESIDENT NIXON, IN HIS MESSAGE OF APRIL 24TH TO THE CONGRESS STATED THAT OUR ASSISTANCE IS A "WISE INVESTMENT . . . IN THE INTEREST OF OUR OWN NATION, IN THE INTERESTS OF OUR HISTORICAL ROLES AS A GENEROUS AND COURAGEOUS DEFENDER OF FREEDOM AND HUMAN RIGHTS. . . AND THE INTERESTS OF WORLD PEOPLE."

(A) HOW DOES U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO KOREA MADE THE U.S. "A GENEROUS AND COURAGEOUS DEFENDER OF FREEDOM AND HUMAN RIGHTS"? HOW DOES U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO KOREA ADVANCE HUMAN RIGHTS IN THAT COUNTRY? HOW MIGHT IT DETER HUMAN RIGHTS?

(B) HOW DOES U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO KOREA ADVANCE WORLD PEACE? DOESN'T A REPRESSIVE SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT WEAKEN ITS NATIONAL SECURITY AND INCREASE THE THREAT OF AGGRESSION FROM THE NORTH?

(C) ,WOULDN'T A MODEST CUTBACK IN MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO KOREA BE AN EFFECTIVE METHOD OF PRESSING THE GOVERNMENT TO RESTORE DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES? IF NOT, WHAT MEASURES DOES THE DEPARTMENT INTEND TO USE?

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THE SUBCOMMITTEES WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING THE DEPARTMENT'S PREPARED STATEMENT BY JULY 26TH.

IN ADDITION TO HAVING A WITNESS FROM THE DEPARTMENT, THE SUBCOMMITTEES WILL BE HEARING FROM FORMER AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN, EDWIN O. REISCHAUER, AND WILLIAM BUTLER, AN ATTORNEY WHO RECENTLY RETURNED FROM SOUTH KOREA AS AN OBSERVER FOR AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. END QUOTE.

2. SEPTTEL FOLLOWS. INGERSOLL

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